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AP Lang. and Comp. – Pd. 5

Mr. Ross

*The Crucible:*

“Confessing to a crime you didn’t commit in order to avoid punishment is wise.”

Most circumstances include someone lying by denying something. For example, a parent asks their child if he or she ate the cookies in the jar and the child says no. They say it to avoid punishment or at least put it off for as long as possible. As one gets older, it becomes easier and easier to deny something.

Although one might not consider it awful, when a potential employer asks if the person has ever been fired for stealing, when one denies it, he or she lies to protect him or herself. Also, to confess to something in order to avoid punishment when the person did not actually do it can be just as bad. This in fact goes against the laws of human nature.

First of all, if someone believe that he or she will avoid responsibility by confessing, what would be the point of confessing in the first place if they did not do it? In denying, which everyone is inherently used to, a person speaks truthfully. In any reasonable world, honestly denying something should never result in punishment. Most countries have laws that protect people from being forced into positions in which they believe admission of guilt will release them from punishment. At the same time, though, when someone confesses to a crime, he or she must realize the motives of the person they are confessing to.

John Grisham wrote *The Innocent Man* in which a man is convinced to confess to a crime that he did not commit because he believes that’s the only way to end the interrogation. The officers were able to force the confession out of him because they had no other leads in the case. After he confesses, he’s sentenced to death penalty and imprisonment for over ten years before someone figures out his innocence. By the time of his release, he seems to have aged thirty years and has truly become mentally insane, because of the troubles he was forced to face while serving his unnecessary time. All of this for a confession he believed would free him. Once he realized his mistake it was too late, all being irreversible of his word had no effect on any judge or prosecutor.

Usually, confessing to a crime one did not commit in order to avoid punishment for his or herself does not happen. A person will most likely confess to something they did not do in order to cover for the person they care about not to get caught. It is in human nature for someone to sacrifice himself or herself for someone more vulnerable or someone they care for deeply. For example, if a teenager was to steal something from a store, the mother or father will take the blame for it for protection.

In conclusion, confessing to an uncommitted crime to *avoid* his or her own punishment will never be wise. It will only cause more problems for the person.

“The difference between right and wrong is clear.”

Right and wrong are terms relative to the individual. Someone might think that it is right to take money from someone who did something bad to someone else. Another person might think it is wrong for a woman to work instead of staying home to cook and clean for her family. In fact, the person whose money was stolen most likely thinks that the person who stole from him is wrong. Just as the woman believes that whoever thinks she should not be allowed to work is sexist and she is perfectly fine being able to work.

As seen from the examples, views can be complete opposites from each other, depending on the individual and the circumstances. Although one may think one something is incorrect, there will always be at least one other that has a counter statement that may or may not prove the other wrong. Therefore, right and wrongs can only be clarified as actions that affect others.

Without mental disease, most people know exactly what is morally wrong or right. If someone sat next to another who then hit his or her head with a bat, the other would realize that was morally wrong and most likely walk away or try to help the other person. This all seems to go back to the cardinal rule, “Do to others as you would have them do to you.” (Luke 6:31)

Since each person in this world is entitled to their own opinion, the difference between right and wrong can be unclear at times. Although common sense does exist, and most are able to distinguish between extreme cases of ‘wrong doings’, controversy between smaller arguments do still exist.

Knowing right and wrong can also depend on a persons experience, maturity, and age. A young child does not know the difference between right and wrong. They are taught to not do certain things and by punishment, he or she will begin to realize this. Older men and women may also believe that something is wrong because they were raised in a different time period. Grandparents in today’s society see people with tattoos and believe that they are in gangs or some other bad involvements. They think this because back then, anyone with a tattoo was part or a group of misfits. Today, people see a tattoo as a form of art or spiritual representation.

Since there are so many different views in the world and there is not one mandatory or certain way of thinking, it can be difficult for some to understand differences. Whether extreme or petite, anything can be taken the wrong way. The right thing for someone to do would be to look at things in two perspectives; his or her own, and the perspective of the others. “[Before you criticize someone, you should walk a mile in their shoes. That way when you criticize them, you are a mile away from them and you have their shoes.](http://www.searchquotes.com/quotation/Before_you_criticize_someone%2C_you_should_walk_a_mile_in_their_shoes._That_way_when_you_criticize___t/28455/)” (Unknown quote)

“It is better to die for what you believe in rather than to lie to save your life.”

When someone hears “It is better to die for what you believe in rather than to lie to save your life.” they usually agree. Wouldn’t they be lying to themselves if they did not stand up for what they believed in? Their whole lives would be considered a lie then, right?

Unfortunately, most people do not have the courage to stand up for what they believe in. One will most likely choose to lie if they were given the option to choose between life or death. Lying to save someone’s own life has the equivalence of just giving up. Whoever the person lied to now has power over him or her, trapping them in the lie that they created. The rest of their life has to revolve around that lie.

“She Said Yes,” the story of Cassie Bernall, written by Mister Bernall can be the perfect example of courage. Cassie was unfortunately caught in a high school shooting. When she was asked if she beloved in God, she had the choice to lie and live or stay true to her beliefs and die. She said yes. In a matter of seconds she was shot, all for sticking up for herself and her religion. What if she had not said yes? She would not be the role model of others, her story would be no different than anyone else’s, and she would be forced to live her life in her denial. Would she ever be forgiven by God?

This very same choice has been the cause of multiple problems throughout history. What ever happened to freedom, opinions, voices, or beliefs? Are they all to go straight down the drain when it comes to the point of life or death? It may not be fair but it’s the truth.

Not every person will have to go through this difficult decision, thankfully, but this does not take away from the fact that people do still lie about their beliefs. For example, teenagers are constantly lying about what they do, eat, drink, and etc. in order to fit in. They believe that the worst thing they can do is the best or coolest thing to do.

Ideals and beliefs are what power human life. What someone believe shapes who they are as a person. Typically speaking, when someone sticks to his or her own beliefs, they are held higher than someone that decides to go with whatever the majority wants. This is also the definition of courage, do what is right in the face of difficulty.

“There is only one correct way to interpret the bible.”

The bible can not be interpreted in more than one way. A being exists out there that knows all the answers; the meaning to life, why man kind exists, and what to do to by happy. This being has a name, God, but unfortunately he can’t help clarify. Now, God did not physically write the bible, men did, and they claimed to be under the direct influence of God. They wrote about histories, about moral lessons, and certain rules or commandments people are to follow; exactly how to follow them has been left unclear.

“Honor thy father and mother” (Exodus 20:12) How? Speaking to them respectfully? Obeying them? What if they told their child to steal something. Would that not be going against the “Thou shalt not steal” (Exodus 20:15) commandment? Additionally, the messages written in the bible must be understood in their own context. These messages were written by men of those times for men of those times. Although, not unlike a history lesson, people are still able to learn from the messages, but to understand them properly, he or she must be able to properly understand the times and places the people were in.

For example, when Jesus says “If anyone slaps you on the right cheek, turn to them the other cheek also.” (Matthew 5:39) And in the same line he says “And whosoever shall compel thee to go one mile, go with him two.” (Matthew 5:41) At the time of the second temple, Jerusalem was occupied by the romans. Law stated that if a roman soldier was to as someone to walk and carry his belongings for miles, he or she was forced to. Jesus was preaching tolerance.

In today’s society, there are multiple types of religions; some similar, and others that were completely different, but they were all based on the same texts. These religions can be branched out from the others and at times spring out on their own. Each religion believes that they are the ones that are right; the one thing that all of these religions have in common; the path of God, heaven, happiness, and how to live life exclusively through them and their interpretation of the same book. Clearly they can not all be correct. Logically, all of them are in fact wrong, except one.

If someone were to go into depth of the microcosm of these different religions, he or she will find that even in each of the unique views of the Bible, the individuals themselves have their own views of the religion they preach. Some can be radically different than the way of life, or it could be as simple as the way of pronouncing a name or if they are to pray by lying down or standing up. From these examples one can see that the bible’s true interpretation will always be unclear to humans. The most someone can do is try his or her best to understand and comprehend the bible as fully as possible.

“That which doesn’t destroy us only makes us stronger.”

Has any human not suffered tremendously, at one time or another? All people suffer; in fact they *should* suffer. Suffering motivates a person’s human innovation, creating a solution for their problem.

The quote, “That which doesn’t destroy us only makes us stronger,” aptly reflects the human condition and keeps confidence high. Although abiding by this saying can be difficult for some, especially in the state of doubt or depression, it raises a bit of hope in every person. Believing that there’s something better to come keeps one’s mind positive.

Life itself has controversies, made up of the times where a person suddenly realizes “It is time to fight,” “What doesn’t kill you makes you stronger.”

From an early age, people are taught to pick themselves up if they fall. For example, if a little boy falls off his bike, he stands up, brushes himself off, and keeps riding; motivation. Motivation gives one a reason to do something, making them eager to keep going and be better. What one takes from the experiences and the lessons makes them learn; their weaknesses later turn into their strengths.

Every single person has their own problems and they each think it could be the worst thing that has ever happened to them or just a simple, fixable issue. Selfish people are the real problem. They worry about themselves more than anyone. If they have a dilemma they are going to fix themselves before they help others. They don’t look at their challenge and think “it could be worse”, they think “this has to go.” Though, most of people do not realize that they have overcome plenty of problems. They fight to the end and none of these problems have damaged them. Their problems have only helped them grown tougher and more sage.

Life constantly throws everyone all kinds of twists & turns. They have no right to ask “Why did this happen to me?” unless they as the same question for happiness that comes their way. If someone does not like something, change it. If for some reason they can’t change it, change the way they think about it. “When life gives you a hundred reasons to cry, show life that you have a thousand reasons to smile.” God brings people into deep waters not to drown him or her, but to cleanse them. Every difficult time or moment in life comes with a moment to open a persons mind to something far greater. As they strive to make it through difficult times, hearing the wisdom of those who have struggled, questioned and dreamed before them can make the journey less difficult.

Survival has a rudimentary meaning, the state or fact of continuing to live or exist. People survive things daily, whether they survive cancer, a car crash, or the common cold, whether they paid off a bill or finished their homework on time, they were able to overcome an obstacle. In one way or another, people grow greater after surviving something. They realize the greater possessions in life and things will get better.

“Strength does not come from winning. Your struggles develop your strengths. When you go through hardships and decide not to surrender, that is strength.” - Arnold Schwarzenegger